@GARDENS OF SILIHDA

ANNUAL REPORT
2021/2022
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SUMMARY OF WOMEN’S FUND ARMENIA’S ACTIVITIES OF 2022

2022 was full of new initiatives and new program directions for the Women's Fund Armenia. Over the past year, the Fund has continued to expand its network of partners, giving even more opportunities to women and girls guided by feminist ideas to change their lives and the lives of women like them. In 2022, we continued to work in a crisis context, providing also quick response grants.

Women's Fund Armenia announced 3 grant calls in 2022:

- Call for Teenage Girls' ideas,
- Call for students interested in feminist and gender issues,
- Call for women over 40.

In addition, around 38 projects were awarded grants on various topics. We have started to cooperate with about 20 new organizations, initiative groups and/or individuals. The total amount of grants provided in 2022 was about 50 million drams (120k EUR).

During the year, we had various meetings, events, discussions, visits and other initiatives, the details of which you can find in this report.

Sincerely yours,

Women's Fund Armenia
IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS BY THEIR DIRECTIONS

In 2022, The Women's Fund Armenia has increased the volume of institutional support given to women’s organizations. The purpose of this is to ensure the sustainability of the implemented programs, and from that point of view it is very important that our partner organizations develop their institutional capacities.

In addition, grants were awarded for the following activities: to analyze gender issues, combat trafficking, research the impact of COVID-19 on women in penitentiary institutions, film a series of interviews on various current feminist topics, create space for students interested in feminism and gender issues, organize trainings on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, carry out initiatives on women and peace, slam poetry, shooting social ads against sexism in media and in politics and many other initiatives.
Support for teenage girls feminist initiatives

As a result of a grant call announced in September, the Women's Fund Armenia selected 4 projects aimed at empowering teenage girls. As a result, our teenagers implemented various programs: annual hackathon for girls, creation of a safe space in Charentsavan community and organization of discussions and seminars for and with teenage girls, establishment of a feminist corner in school and discussion of topics of interest to teenage girls, pottery classes for teenage girls in Berdavan.
Supporting the ideas of women over 40

The Women's Fund Armenia, emphasizing efforts to empower women later in life and make their voices heard, announced a grant call in October. As a result, WFA received about **75 applications**, from which **10 programs** were selected. They are aimed at the different preferences and needs of women: discussions on the topic of menopause, raising stereotypes about women over 40 through a performance, support for women in the arts, training and discussions on well-being and mental health, interviews and a film with women with cancer, etc.

![Supporting the ideas of women over 40](image_url)
In 2022, we continued our networking meetings with colleagues. The purpose of such meetings is to learn about their current projects, potential obstacles they face, and to create connections between our partners that strengthen our common activities.

**Meeting in Aghveran**

On April 22-23, a meeting was held in Aghveran between the Women's Fund Armenia and its partners in the context of feminist retreat and partnership. During the meeting, we discussed our current and future plans, as well as learned and applied methods of collective care in order to work and cooperate more effectively in the future.
Meeting with teenage girls

On April 26, Women’s Fund Armenia had a meeting with the new group of teenage girls who won the contest of grants to implement their ideas. During the meeting, the girls got acquainted with the WFA staff, with each other, and talked about their projects. Other teenagers from our previous groups were also present at the meeting. They shared with the new group their experiences of working with the Fund. Another meeting took place in July.
Meeting at the WFA office

On September 14, the WFA staff held a meeting with its partners. During the meeting, our partners presented their current programs and highlighted the important achievements they had made during the implementation of the programs. In addition to program and technical issue discussions, the current situation in Armenia was also discussed during the meeting, in the context of women’s issues as well as the problems of displaced women as a result of Azerbaijani aggression.

The representative of the Sigrid Rausing Trust Fund Chiara de Luca was also present at the meeting.
From November 18 to 19, the Women's Fund Armenia organized another meeting dedicated to self-care for its partners, this time in Dilijan. During the two days, the participants discussed the war and its psychological consequences. They also got acquainted with psychological first aid techniques, and learned about the importance of self-care in stressful situations.
Capacity building meetings

During the month of July, the Fund also organized two institutional capacity building meetings in Gyumri for local partners. The aim of this initiative is to help women's organizations develop the necessary strategies and policies for their activities based on feminist principles. During the two meetings, about 15 employees gained knowledge about the feminist approach to public organization management, feminist values and principles, gender-sensitive budgeting, its purpose and principles.

Online meetings

In September and November, we also had a series of online meetings with our partners, the purpose of which was to share experiences, things to do and future plans. Our colleagues from Tavush, Shirak, Lori, and Gegharkunik presented the situation in the regions and what steps they are taking to support women in these situations during the online meeting.
**NEW INITIATIVES**

**FemTalks**

In March, we launched a new initiative, FemTalks. Each month, a female speaker presents a speech in her professional field of interest, discussing feminist and gender-sensitive issues. The speakers are mostly women, and the discussions are based on feminist and gender-sensitive analysis of various realities and problems. The FemTalks is another opportunity for the feminist community to resume discussions and to activate the feminist discourse based on them, especially in this time of geopolitical turmoil around the world. During 2022, we had a total of 8 FemTalks, the videos of which are available [here](#).
Another important initiative at the beginning of the year was the completion of WFA policies. They represent the main principles of the Fund's activity. You can get acquainted with our policies [here](#) (the page is regularly updated).

LIVE BROADCASTS

In 2022, we also had several thematic live broadcasts with different specialists:
Online misogyny as a threat to feminism: April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). On that occasion, we held a live session with our guests from Sexual Assault Crisis Center and Women's Resource Center, Anush Gabrielyan and Sona Baldryan respectively. We discussed the purpose of the month as well as the situation in Armenia regarding online misogyny.

Hope-based communication, during which we talked with Hayk Abrahamyan on hope-based communication, its concepts, peculiarities and strategies.

Discussing sexual education in Armenia, during which we discussed the topic in the context of women's rights with Anush Poghosyan, coordinator of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Program of the Women's Resource Center.

A conversation about the feminist philanthropist activities of Mariam Khatisyan, Mariam Tumanyan and Sibil: The conversation was based on research conducted on these women philanthropists.

With this link, you can get acquainted with all the previous live broadcasts with different guests.

WEBINARS

Within the framework of the "Feminist Landscapes – Civil Society Dialogue with All Voices" project, which is implemented with the support of the Women's Fund Armenia, the German filia
Foundation and the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on April 14, the WFA partner "Agat" NGO of women with disabilities held a webinar titled "From Exclusion to Inclusion." The aim was to address the stereotypical approaches that exist regarding people with disabilities and to discuss correct and inclusive forms of communication. You can watch the webinar here.

The second webinar was organized on June 7. This time, our colleagues from Pink Armenia NGO and the Non-Discrimination and Equality Coalition jointly held a discussion called "Feminist art and theater."

On July 14, within the framework of the same program, we organized another webinar, this time an international one. The topic of the webinar was “Women and Militarism: From Politics to Personal Stories.” The 6 invited speakers presented the global trends of militarism from the point of view of feminist criticism, its consequences in the world and in particular in our region, as well as the impact of the Karabakh conflict on the situation of women.
The picture above is the graphic image of the webinar: you can see some of the thoughts expressed by the speakers. And you can watch the webinar (also with English subtitles) here.

The last discussion held within the framework of the project was conducted by Socioscope NGO in November. The topic of the discussion was "The issue of women in post-revolutionary Armenia," during which the researchers of the organization presented their research:

- The women's issue and its causes (in Armenian),
- The War from a Woman's Perspective,
- Why is the Human Rights Agenda so Attractive to Right-Wing Groups?

The video of the meeting can be found here.

And the full list of webinars is available here.
In 2022, we launched another “Femstory: Feminist oral story archive” project. In June, a three-day course titled "Feminist Methodology and Oral History Collection" took place within its framework. During the training, about 30 future interviewers from Yerevan and different regions of Armenia got acquainted with feminist research methodology, ethics, the method of feminist oral histories, as well as the procedures of the Femstory project.

We started the collection of women's stories with selected interviewers. And to get more detailed information about the program, we suggest listening to Sona Baldryan, the coordinator of the program, here. You can also get acquainted with the annual summary of the Femstory program with this link.
VISITS

On October 17-21, the WFA co-founders attended the annual meeting of the European Chapter of the Prospera International Network of Women's Fund held in Poland. The meeting was hosted by our colleagues from the Polish FemFund. The strategy and priorities of the European Chapter were discussed during the meeting.

On October 24-28, we hosted representatives of the German filia foundation, as well as from the Georgian, Ukrainian, and Polish women's funds, with whom we had discussions on various topics, we summarized the jointly implemented project called
Feminist landscape. As a result of joint discussions, we also have FemTalk. In addition, the media platform openDemocracy published an analytical article presenting the feminist landscape in the countries mentioned. The article is available here.

We also had guests from the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Fund, to whom we presented the Fund's activities.

From October 24 to 25, the Femstory project coordinator Sona Baldrian and two of its interviewers Arpine Ghambaryan and Lyudmila Shirvanyan took part in the South Caucasus Regional Conference on Memory Politics organized by the Heinrich Boell Foundation. On the conference's second day, Sona Baldrian conducted a workshop on feminist oral history practice in which students from different countries of the region took part.
From November 13th to 15th, the annual meeting of EU-Russia Civil Society Forum's Herstory project took place in Yerevan. There are activists from Armenia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia involved in the project where they collect women's stories and turn them into walking tours in their respective cities. During the meeting the participants discussed regional challenges as well as mapped out future plans.

On November 14th we were happy to host our partners at our office where we collected a group oral history interview on women's experiences during violent conflicts.

December 3rd marked the inauguration of Prospera's XII Biennial held in Oaxaca City, Mexico. This day was devoted to shaping feminist funding futures, an urgent need to respond to the current and future global crises that affect humanity and our planet, and the overall funding landscape for women's, girls', non-binary,
trans, and intersex communities for many years to come. The WFA co-founder Gohar Shahnazaryan was also present at the meeting.

During the year, the Fund also carried out monitoring visits to its partners in Yerevan and other regions of Armenia to get acquainted with the progress of the programs, to understand the needs of women’s organizations and initiative groups on the spot.
As a partner organization of the Women's Resource Center, in 2022 we participated in capacity building courses organized by the Center. Course topics range from strategic communication, social inclusion, budgeting to effective management, working with the donor community, and many more.
"Find your strength" self-defense course

On July 30, we organized a self-defense course for our partners, conducted by Gohar Khachatryan. During the course, the participants got acquainted with the basic principles of self-defense, techniques, and types. Violence against women and its reflection in the Armenian reality were also discussed. Issues such as verbal boundaries, assertiveness, using body language for self-defense, and others were also discussed. Participants also presented personal stories, sharing their own experiences of self-defense.

Workshop

On September 16, the "Armenian Potential in Ottoman Provinces" workshop was held at the WFA by the researcher and historian Talin Suciyan. Researchers, historians, orientalists, anthropologists, and students participated in the workshop held in an interactive format.

Together with Talin Suciyan, the participants read and analyzed a series of archived documents from 19th century interrogations in the Ottoman Empire. During the workshop, the participants discovered the life of Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, particularly the status and lifestyle of Armenian women in those communities.
**Movie evening**

On October 6, the film "Sweeping Yerevan" by Nairi Hakhverdi was screened at the WFA, which was attended not only by the director of the film, but also by the main character of the film, Marina Ginosyan. "Sweeping Yerevan" is a poetic portrait of a woman named Marina, who walks 40 kilometers every night to sweep the streets of the capital, Yerevan. Members of civil society, students, and artists were also present that evening. During the event, they discussed many social issues raised in the film, including violations of women's labor rights, the impact of unfavorable working conditions on women, the problem of unpaid domestic work in Armenia, etc.
“The State of the Feminist Movement in Armenia”

The Women’s Fund Armenia has initiated a research with the preliminary title “The State of the Feminist Movement in Armenia.” The purpose of the research is to clarify what stage or situation the feminist movement is in, what are the main directions of the movement, forms of activism, what agenda(s) it has, which crises are faced by the movement and what are the main directions and forms of overcoming those, etc. Research with such an approach has not been done in Armenia yet, the crises that happened recently and the ongoing ones make the need for such research even more evident. The research is based not only on the tools developed by the Women's Fund in Armenia, but also the "movement capacity assessment tool" (MCAT) proposed by the Global Fund for Women, which we tried to localize in the Armenian context.

“Collective care: Summary of needs assessment data” report

Although collective care as a concept is a relatively new approach within civil society, elements of collective care have always been used, especially among women's organizations and initiative groups. The purpose of this report is to highlight the perceptions, practices and needs regarding healing, self-care and collective care among the partner organizations of the Women's Fund Armenia.

The report (in Armenian) is available here. Read the summary of the report here.
During this period, the design and renovation works of Silihdar Gardens are also underway. We remind you that the area will serve as a center of healing and collective rest for women and girls. We already have a page dedicated to the gardens of Silihdar on our website. And you can follow the news about the area’s activities on its social media pages on Instagram and Facebook.
At the beginning of May, we also visited The Gardens of Silihdar with WFA board members to show them the place and introduce the concept of it.
OUR SUPPORTERS

- filia
die frauenstiftung.
- calala
Fondo de Mujeres
- The Sigrid Rausing Trust
- FENOMENAL FUNDS
- Prospera
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF WOMEN'S FUNDS
- KVINNA KVINNA
- Equality Fund
- Norwegian Helsinki Committee